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O. CLEMENS, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

SWAMP LANDS.

Congress granted to certain States, containing public lands, the swamp and inundated lands therein. This act was obtained upon memorials from the States, in order to reclaim them for cultivation; and to abate the cause of sickness in their neighborhood, (which Congress had refused to do,) under the implied *obligation* that the States would do so.

The State of Missouri, then, turned those lands over to the counties and provided for that appointment of commisioners to examine, select and report, each identical tract of the lands contemplated by congress. Most of the counties, we are informed, took measures to make the selection, but we have seen no official general report of the amount, so selected, by the counties.

Isolated reports of some of the counties, however, are calculated to indicate a very different character of the counties from that heretofore held and reported.

For instance: Monroe, Shelby, Macon, Linn, and other interior counties, always, heretofore, held and reputed to be high, dry, rolling, and well drained, and of a soil exceedingly, rich, and reported as having obtained 40,000, 14,000, 30,000, and 25,000 acres respectively of wet, swampy and inundated lands, after extensive private locations amidst and alongside of lands of no better character!

We cannot understand this, especially, while the general reputation of those counties is not considered as imparied by the discovery.

But, what is more singular, it is said that many large tracts brought under this description, are located on some of the highest and best prairies, noted for great fertility and the best cultible lands, and which though level, are known to plough up dry, and to produce well!

We are not inimical to the reduction of all our public lands to private ownership; but large county proprietorships, free of taxation, is as bad as that of the Federal Government, especially if not redeemed or used for the improvement of the country.

But, there is another view of this subject which deserves public attention.

These grants were made to the State on petition and memorial, with the avowed object of reclamation and improvement, by the States. Declaring the fulfillment of that obligation the State turned them over to the counties, within which they lie, under the same *implied* obligation, but carefully avoiding the conditions.

Congress afterwards generously granted lands to aid the construction of Rail Roads in this State.

In the location of these roads, companies find many valuable lands within their limits, claimed by the counties. Here, then, are the only parties who can contest the fact of any tract, selected by the county, being or not being, of the description within the true intent and meaning of the act of Congress.

Rail Roads will reclaim and elevate the value of even swamp lands, in their course, and being of paramount importance to the counties through, or near which they run, they are justly entitled to all the lands, not *strictly* within the meaning of the act of Congress, and which fall within their range, and the allotment of their numbers.

In justice to the great public advantages of the Rail Road to the country, the counties might well afford to relinquish to the companies an equivalent of their lands to the amount assigned by Congress.

If the counties will not do this, we submit that the proper officers of the Rail Road companies, on the part of stockholders, should examine the lands selected as swamp lands and test the claims of the counties, upon the true discription of the land.

The counties are only entitled, by the character and description of the land. The Rail Roads are entitled by limitation of space and numbers.

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☞ See terms at the head of this column

For the Journal.

RAILROAD ROUTES TO THE PACIFIC.

(Continued.)

Taking, then, the main stem of Dr. Gwin's plan, from Memphis, via Fulton and Albuquerque, through Walker's pass, and thence north to San Francisco and the mouth of the Columbia as an illustration of the Southern route, what advantages and disadvantages does it present? Its main advantages are that it traverses New Mexico from East to West, crossing the Colorado probably at a navigable point, finding there a communication with the Pacific by steam vessels, and giving a site for an important city, and crossing the Sierra Nevada by Walker's pass (universally admitted to be the most favorable point in the whole range), from which point, by its northern course, it traverses the fertile vallsys of California and Oregon, affording them an easy means of inter-communication with each other, and with the older States. Some of these advantages it possesses in common with a more northern route, and some are peculiar to it alone. Probably New Mexico will never become of any value to us until penetrated by railroads. She is now a reproach and an expense to our government, and such is she likely to remain until the quickening influence of the railroad shall exert its civilizing, wealth-creating energies. Her natural resources are great, and the development of these, alone, would probably repay to our Government the cost of the road. In a military point of view, this road is very important, as it would furnish the means to effect what we have not, as yet, been able to do without it, i. e. repress the savage tribes of that region, and protect our own and the Mexican frontier. The day may not be far distant when the possession of lower California and Sonora may give us the complete control of the Gulf of California, and the ports in it and on the neighboring coasts. Such an event would make this southern road indispensable. The crossing of the Sierra Nevada by Walker's Pass is looked upon as entirely practicable at all seasons, and this fact furnishes perhaps the strongest argument in favor of the Southern route. An easy connection with San Diego, next to the Bay of San Francisco, our most valuable harbor on the California coast, and within a few miles of the South Line, is another important advantage, peculiar to the Southern route. The advantages peculiar to a Southern route, are then, I think, sufficient to induce its immediate construction, not upon Gwin's plan, and as the only line, embracing all its connections, but as a main stem from Memphis, or some southern point, to San Diego, leaving the wants of the future to determine its Eastern and Western Extension.

The objections to Gwin's plan of one main southern stem, for the use of the whole Union, and as preferable to a route via the Salt Lake, I will now briefly detail:

(*To be Continued.*)

Liquor-Law Reform.

Whisky Did It.

Thus talks neighbor Van Vorhes, of the Athens *Messenger* last week, in announcing that on the previous "Saturday morning Richard Dowler, one of the "oldest inhabitants," of that vicinity, died suddenly while in a state of intoxication. In truth, it would have been difficult for him to have found time to die while in any other condition within the past score or more of years. We have not learned the particulars, only that he died as the drunkard dieth —steeped in the bitterest dregs of poverty and degradation. While living, some there were who would court him and roll out whole rivers of liquid death for his hard-earned dimes—but in his miserable death, not one tear of sympathy will be dropped over the grave of poor Dick Dowler, who once, perhaps, may have entertained as high hopes of happiness as any in our midst.

We heard an individual remark that community had lost nothing by his death. Perhaps not —but what has HE lost by his course of profligacy? Think you not that he possessed an immortal spirit? And who will be held responsible as an accomplice in his course of life, and in his miserable death? We seek not to penetrate the veil between the present and future. We do not know who furnished him with his last bottle of liquor, but Omnipotence will take cogniganee of these things. "*Wo unto him that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips*"!—*McConnellsville* (O.) *Herald.*

The steamer *Emma Watt* was sunk on Friday week, in the Wabash river, near Vincennes, by coming in collision with the Herman.

Good Selected Story.

THE [illegible]MAN'S STORY.—A THRILLING SKETCH.

(Continued.)

As [illegible]aster took his seat, the old man arose, his tall [illegible]owering in its symmetry, and his chest swell[illegible] he inhaled his breath through his thin, dilated [illegible]ls. To me, at that time, there was something [illegible]nspiring and grand in the appearance of the old m[illegible] he stood, with his full eye upon the audience. [illegible]eath shut hard, and a silence like that of death [illegible]ghout the church.

He [illegible] his gaze upon the tavern keeper, and that pecul[illegible]e lingered and kindled for half a moment. The [illegible]ew red upon his forehead, and beneath the heav[illegible]s his eyes glittered and glowed like a serpent's [illegible]e tavern keeper quailed before that searching g[illegible] and I felt a relief when the old man withdrew [illegible]aze. For a moment more he seemed lost in thou[illegible]d then, in low and tremulous tones, com-mene[illegible] There was a depth in that voice, a thrilling swee[illegible] and pathos, which riveted every heart in the chur[illegible]ore the first period had been rounded. My fathe[illegible]ention had become fixed upon the eye of the spea[illegible]ith an interest I had never before seen him exhi[illegible] I can but briefly remember the substance of wha[illegible]old man said, though the scene is as vivid befo[illegible]as any that I ever witnessed.

"[illegible]iends! I am a stranger in your village, and trust[illegible]y call you friends. A new star has arisen and [illegible]is hope in the dark night which hangs, like a pa[illegible]loom, over our country."

W[illegible] thrilling depth of voice, the speaker continu[illegible]"O! God, thou who lookest with compassion upon[illegible]most erring of earth's frail children, I thank thee[illegible]a brazen serpent has been lifted up on which the [illegible]ard can look and be healed. That a beacon has [illegible] out upon the darkness that surrounds him, whi[illegible]all guide back to honor and heaven the bruised and [illegible]y wanderer."

It [illegible]range what power there is in some voices. The[illegible]ker's voice was low and measured, but a tear trem[illegible] in every tone, and, before I knew why, a tear [illegible]ped upon my hand, followed by others like rain[illegible]s. The old man brushed one from his own eye, [illegible] continued:

"[illegible] and Christians, you have just heard that I am a vi[illegible] and a fanatic. I am not. As God knows my [illegible]sad heart, I came here to do good. Hear me and [illegible]ust.

"[illegible] an old man, standing alone at the end of life's [illegible]rney.

"[illegible]e is deep sorrow in my heart and tears in my eyes[illegible] I have journeyed over a dark, beaconless ocean, and [illegible]ife's bright hopes have been wrecked. I am with[illegible] friends, home or kindred, on earth, and look with[illegible]ging to the rest of the night of death. Without [illegible]ends, kindred or home! It was not once so!"

N[illegible]e could withstand the touching pathos of the old [illegible]. I noticed a tear trembling on the lid of my fath[illegible] eye, and I no more felt ashamed of my own.

"[illegible], my friends, it was not so once. Away over the [illegible] waves which have wrecked my hopes, there is t[illegible]lessed light of happiness and home. I reach aga[illegible]onvulsively for the shrines of the household idol[illegible]at once were mine; now mine no more."

T[illegible]old man seemed looking away through vacancy upo[illegible]me bright vision, his lips apart and his finger extended. I involuntarily turned in the direction where it was pointed, dreading to see some shadow invoked by its magic moving.

"[illegible]once had a mother. With her old heart crushed with[illegible]orrows, she went down to her grave. I once had [illegible] an [illegible]hly home. Her eye was as mild as a summer sky, and her heart as faithful and true as ever guarded and [illegible]erished a husband's love. Her blue eye grew dim[illegible] the floods of sorrow washed away its brightness, and the living heart I wrung till every fibre was brok[illegible]. I once had a noble, a brave and beautiful boy; but he was driven out from the ruins of his home and [illegible]y old heart yearns to know if he yet lives. I [illegible] one had a babe, a sweet, tender blossom; but these hands destroyed it, and it lives with one who loveth children.

"Do not be startled, friends—I am not a murderer, in the common acceptation of the term.—Yet there is light in my evening sky. A spirit mother rejoices over the return of her prodigal son. The wife smiles upon him who again turns back to virtue and honor. The child-angel visits me at night-fall, and I feel the hallowing touch of a tiny palm upon my feverish cheek. My brave boy! if he yet lives, would forgive the sorrowing old man for the treatment which drove him into the world, and the blow that maimed him for life. God forgive me for the ruin which I have brought upon me and mine."

He again wiped a tear from his eye. My father watched him with a strange intensity, and a countenance unusually pale and excited by some strong emotion.

"I was once a fanatic, and madly followed the malign light which led me to ruin. I was a fanatic when I sacrificed my wife, children, happiness and home, to the accursing demon of the bowl. I once adored the gentle being whom I injured so deeply.

"I was a drunkard. From respectability and affluence, I plunged into degradation and poverty. I dragged my family down with me. For years I saw her cheek pale and her step grow weary. I left her alone amid the wreck of her home idols, and rioted at the tavern.—She never complained, yet she and the children went hungry for bread.

"One New Year's night, I returned late to the hut where charity had given us a roof. She was yet up, and shivering over the coals. I demanded food, but she burst into tears and told me there was none. I fiercely ordered her to get some. She turned her eyes sadly upon me, the tears falling fast over her pale cheek.

"At this moment the child in its cradle awoke and sent up a famished wail, startling the despairing mother like a serpent's sting.

"We have no food, James—have had none for two days. I have nothing for the babe—My once kind husband, *must it starve?*'

"That sad, pleading face, and those streaming eyes, and the feeble wail of the child, maddened me, and I—yes, I—struck her a [illegible] upon the face, and she fell forward upon the hearth. The furies of hell boiled in my bosom, and with deeper intensity, as I felt that I had committed a wrong. I had never struck Mary before, but now some terrible impulse bore me on, and I stooped down, as well as I could in my drunken state, and clinched both hands in her hair.

"'God of mercy, James!' exclaimed my wife, as she looked up in my fiendish countenance, 'you will not kill us; you will not harm Willie,' and she sprung to the cradle and grasped him in her embrace. I caught her again by the hair and dragged her to the door, and, as I lifted the latch, the wind burst in with a cloud of snow. With the yell of a fiend, I still dragged her on and hurled her out into the darkness and the storm. With a wild ha! ha! I closed the door and turned the bottom, her pleading moans mingling with the wail of the blast and sharper cry of her babe. But my work was not complete. I turned to the little bed where lay my older son and snatched him from his slumbers, and, against his half-awakened struggles, opened the door and threw him out. In the agony of fear, he called to me by a name I was no longer fit to bear, and locked his little fingers into my side-pocket. I could not wrench that fiend grasp away, and, with the coolness of a devil, as I was, shut the door upon the arm, and with my knife severed the arm at the wrist."

The speaker ceased a moment and buried his face in his hands, as if to shut out some fearful dream, and his deep chest heaved like a storm-swept sea. My father had arisen from his seat and leaning forward, his countenance bloodless, and the large drops standing out upon his brow. Chills crept back to my young heart, and I wished I was at home. The old man looked up, and I never have since beheld such mortal agony pictured upon a human face, as there was on his.

It was morning when I awoke, and the storm had ceased, but the cold was intense. I first secured a drink of water, and then I looked in the accustomed place for Mary. As I missed her, for the first time a shadowy sense of some horrible nightmare began to dawn upon my wandering mind. I thought that I had dreamed a fearful dream, but involuntarily opened the outside door with a shuddering dread. As the door opened, the snow burst in, followed by a fall of something across the threshhold, scattering the snow and striking the floor with a sharp, hard sound. My blood shot like red hot arrows through my veins, and I rubbed my eyes to shut out the sight. It was—it—God, how horrible!—it was my own injured Mary and her babe, frozen to ice! The ever true mother had bowed herself over the child to shield it, and wrapped all her own clothing around it leaving her own person stark and bare to the storm. She had placed her hair over the face of the child, and the sleet had frozen it to the white cheek. The frost was white in its half-opened eyes, and upon its tiny fingers. I know not what became of my brave boy."

(*To be Continued.*)

News Items.

Mr. Edward Snider, of the firm of Snider & Turner, of Dubuque, committed suicide, in Keokuk, last Friday night, by cutting his throat.—Cause, reverses in business. He had been married only about three weeks.

MILITARY EXPLOIT.—Last week, two members of Capt. Almstead's company of Artillery went from St. Louis, upon the request of the owners of the Tennessee Iron Works, on the Cumberland river, for the purpose of shooting off the top of a chimney one hundred and eighty feet high, which for some weeks had been tottering, and threatened to demolish a portion of the Iron Works. At the first fire, with their piece loaded to the muzzle, they brought down forty feet of the enemy, and thus removed the danger.

A project is on foot to construct a marine railway, one and a quarter miles long, on the Indiana side of he Ohio at the Falls of Louisville. The only present mode of passing boats in time of low water, is by the Portland canal, on the Kentucky side of the river; this canal can only pass boats the dimensions of which do not exceed 180 feet in length and 48 feet beam over the guards, consequently the business must then be carried on by boats within these dimensions. The new idea is simply to construct upon the Indiana bank of the river a railway, the length of which will be about one and a quarter miles, and the width about 62 feet, with proper locks at each terminus; the whole to be of such magnitude as to be able, without discharging cargo, to pass steamboats of the largest class, or say 350 feet in length, and 80 feet beam over the